

Background

Index testing is one of the most efficient strategies to identify children living with HIV. Several guidelines recommend index testing (genealogy testing) be offered to all newly diagnosed individuals. Health system strengthening activity, using a standard quality improvement (QI) framework was implemented by the PEPFAR through USAID-funded Accelerating Control of the HIV Epidemic in Nigeria (ACE) Project to improve the offer rate of index testing. We assessed the outcome of this initiative.



Utilizing the Model for Improvement Framework to improve Index Testing Offer rate in Nigeria

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Description

The model for improvement framework was used in the design of a 12-week quality improvement initiative at four health facilities in Akwa Ibom State, Nigeria.

These facilities had <50% genealogy offer rate (i.e. the proportion of clients offered genealogy testing) as of beginning of August 2022. In the "Plan" phase, focused group discussions conducted for healthcare workers showed limited knowledge among service providers, unstructured clinic flow and documentation gaps as the top three barriers to index testing services delivery. During the "Do" phase, training was conducted for healthcare workers; service and documentation flow within the facility was established; and documentation on paper records were compared with electronic records to identify actual service gaps. Weekly genealogy offer rate was plotted on a run-chart during the "Study" phase.



Lessons Learnt

At the beginning of the implementation, the total gap for missed opportunities in genealogy was 14,476 clients in the participating sites. After 12 weeks of quality improvement, genealogy offer rate increased from 32.5% to 98.3% (Figure 1). A total of 22 HIV-positive children (males=8;females=14) were identified from the genealogy testing.



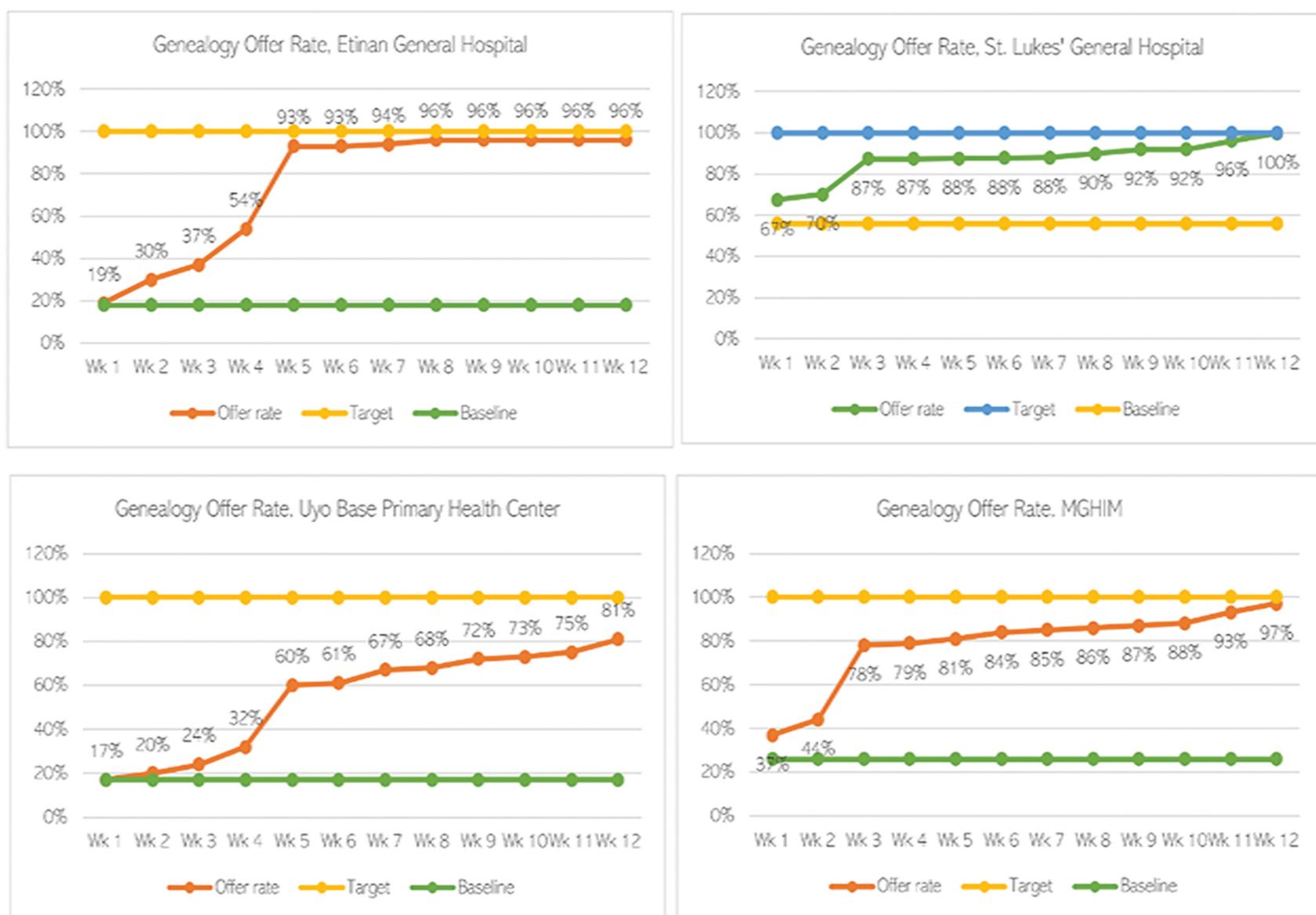
Conclusion

Health system strengthening approach improved genealogy offer rate and the facilities intends to spread this learning to other components of the index testing cascade.



Keyword: CLHIV, Health systems strengthening, Genealogy, Quality improvement, Index testing service

Figure 1: Weekly progress across four large-volume comprehensive ART treatment health facilities in Akwa Ibom with less than 50% genealogy offer rate.



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